United Nations S/PV.3351

Security Council

Forty-ninth Year

Provisional

3351st Meeting
Friday, 18 March 1994, 4 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Mérimée	(France)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Ricardes
	Brazil	Mr. Sardenberg
	China	Mr. Li Zhaoxing
	Czech Republic	Mr. Kovanda
	Djibouti	Mr. Olhaye
	New Zealand	Mr. Keating
	Nigeria	Mr. Gambari
	Oman	Mr. Al-Khussaiby
	Pakistan	Mr. Marker
	Russian Federation	Mr. Vorontsov
	Rwanda	Mr. Bizimana
	Spain	Mr. Yañez Barnuevo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir David Hannay
	United States of America	Mrs. Albright

Agenda

The situation in the occupied Arab territories

Letter dated 25 February 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1994/222)

Letter dated 25 February 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1994/223)

94-85294 (E)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*.

Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one week*, to the Chief, Verbatim Reporting Section, room C-178 and incorporated in a copy of the record.

The meeting was called to order at 4.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the occupied Arab territories

Letter dated 25 February 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1994/222)

Letter dated 25 February 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1994/223)

The President *(interpretation from French):* In accordance with the decisions taken at previous meetings of the Council, I invite the representative of Israel to take a place at the Council table; I invite the Permanent Observer of Palestine to take a place at the Council table; I invite the representatives of Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, Greece, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Mauritania, Qatar, Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Arab Emirates to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Yaacobi (Israel) took a place at the Council table; Mr. Al-Kidwa (Palestine) took a place at the Council table; Mr. Farhadi (Afghanistan), Mr. Lamamra (Algeria), Mr. Al-Faihani (Bahrain), Mr. Rahman (Bangladesh), Mr. Sacirbey (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Mr. Elaraby (Egypt), Mr. Exarchos (Greece), Mr. Soegarda (Indonesia), Mr. Khoshroo (Islamic Republic of Iran), Mr. Hatano (Japan), Mr. Bataineh (Jordan), Mr. Abulhasan (Kuwait), Mr. Makkawi (Lebanon), Mr. Elhouderi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. Razali (Malaysia), Mr. Ould Mohamed Mahmoud (Mauritania), Mr. Al-Ni'mah (Qatar), Mr. Yassin (Sudan), Mr. Awad (Syrian Arab Republic), Mr. Abdellah (Tunisia), Mr. Batu (Turkey), Mr. Khandogy (Ukraine) and Mr. Samhan (United Arab Emirates) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President *(interpretation from French):* The Security Council will now resume its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/1994/280, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Djibouti, on behalf of the non-aligned members of the Security Council, France, the Russian Federation, Spain and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

I should like to draw the attention of members of the Council to the following documents: S/1994/242, letter dated 1 March 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General; S/1994/244, letter dated 1 March 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Tajikistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General; S/1994/247, letter dated 2 March 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General; S/1994/256, letter dated 3 March 1994 from the Chargé d'affaires *a.i.* of the Permanent Mission of Brunei Darussalam to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General; S/1994/269, letter dated 7 March 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council; S/1994/275, letter dated 7 March 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, transmitting the text of a statement adopted by the States members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference in New York; and S/1994/295, letter dated 14 March 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to take a decision on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall take it that it is so decided.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A paragraph-by-paragraph vote on the draft resolution contained in document S/1994/280 has been requested. Since I hear no objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote paragraph by paragraph.

I shall first call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Olhaye (Djibouti): My Government has already condemned most vigorously the Hebron massacre. However, on behalf of my delegation, I wish to offer once again our profound condolences to the families and relatives of the innocent victims killed and injured in the 25 February outrage at the Al-Ibrahimi mosque in the occupied town of Hebron. We join all civilized people throughout the world, who condemned in the strongest terms this outrage, this reckless and savage massacre of Palestinian worshippers kneeling in sacred and peaceful prayer during the holy month of Ramadan, in the holiest of places: that of worship.

The delay in the Council's reaction is unfortunate and regrettable. Along with the massacre itself, this will undoubtedly alter for ever the political landscape of the occupied territories. While many have announced the coming death of the peace process, my delegation feels on the contrary that the tragedy has forced us all - Israel, the Palestinians, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the other major players and the Security Council - to confront the real bedrock issues and attitudes, which, if not dealt with expeditiously, could make that prediction a reality. There may, rather, be a desire to make the best of a bad situation.

The attack itself was clearly premeditated and unprovoked, and, if reports of the crime are to be believed, was carried out by one "deranged " gunman able to load and reload his weapon several times over a lengthy period of time. One can only wonder about the unfathomable whereabouts of the Israeli army in a place of such sensitivity. The implications of the army's slow reaction time are indeed unsettling, particularly if subsequent reports by Israeli officers are to be believed, claiming that there were orders not to use all necessary means available to restrain settlers engaged in such acts of violence.

While it is true that this heinous act represents the single largest carnage of Palestinians since the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza by Israel in 1967, it is but the latest outburst of bloodletting in a long history of such incidents. Clearly, a large segment of the settler community feels threatened by the spectre of peace with the Palestinians, and as a result has called for violent acts and civil war to subvert the peace process. Having wrapped themselves in a cloak of hatred and violence, these settlers have created a mind-set giving rise to incidents of which the Hebron murder is but one among many.

Unarmed and unprotected against these self-appointed settler vigilantes, and at the same time confronted with the acknowledged stringent treatment of the occupying forces, Palestinians have just reason to feel their lives threatened as individuals and as a people, in a situation offering them little hope or chance of redemption. Given these conditions, the Hebron massacre assumes the aspect of an all too predictable tragedy, surprising only in its magnitude. In fact, the call of the draft resolution before us, for Israel, the occupying Power, to confiscate arms with the aim of preventing illegal acts of violence by Israeli settlers amounts to the minimum the international community could expect. There is a need for a great deal more.

We welcome the initial reaction of the Israeli Government: strong public condemnation and the announced intention of disarming a few selected individual settlers, together with the outlawing of two of the most extreme of the settler organizations. But subsequent events have clearly demonstrated that these measures alone will not significantly reduce tensions or preclude a repetition of such violence at the hands of diehard elements in the settler community, many of whom were seen to dance in the streets and praise the "martyrdom" of the murderer.

Understandably, therefore, Palestinians in the occupied territories have just cause to fear for their safety, in a place where the Government issues guns to one element of the population for "self protection" against another. For many years the Security Council has repeatedly brought into question Israel's behaviour as an occupying Power, under the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, particularly with respect to its treatment of Palestinians. That same concern is again expressed in the draft resolution before us.

One result has been to foster an attitude among settlers that they are a law unto themselves, buttressed by a growing fortress mentality which refuses to recognize the march of history and even what is in the best long-term interest of the country to which they have pledged their loyalty. They are clearly a dangerous loose cannon in the cauldron of events in Palestine, and we can only hope that the Israeli authorities will at last respect the draft resolution's call for measures to guarantee the safety and protection of all Palestinian civilians throughout the occupied territories.

For those reasons, perceptible relief was felt around the world with the signing on 13 September 1993 of the historic White House peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians, designed to bring self-rule to the Israeli occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. Since we had come that far, it was hoped that the spirit of cooperation and the desire for peace were strong enough to overcome any

tendency to nit-pick over details until the accord died - particularly taking into consideration the deadlines for the beginning of the process of handing over security to the Palestinians in December and the conclusion of the process in April 1994.

My delegation is therefore gravely concerned that the issue of control of border-crossing points in the designated self-rule areas has been allowed to stall the negotiations and to prevent the full signature and hand-over expected. The result has been to push many who desire peace and a solution into difficult positions and to allow passions to rise on all sides. Now, with this grotesque crime at the mosque and with a death toll exceeding 60, and still rising, and at least 300 wounded, vigorous condemnation alone by the international community cannot be expected to allay the justifiable fears of innocent Palestinian civilians at this late stage, without an equally vigorous and unambiguous change in the policies of Israel toward its settler community in the occupied territories. As we have said, the Security Council has addressed the issue of Israel's actions in the occupied territories on countless occasions, in resolution after resolution, and there can now be no special dispensation for its continued repudiation with impunity of the fulfilment of its obligations under international law as an occupying Power.

In these circumstances, there is a very compelling reason for an international presence in the occupied territories to assure Palestinians of their safety. The disarmament of the Jewish settlers is surely a legitimate demand of the Palestinians. Restrictions against settlers in some populated areas, if not the outright barring of them, is also essential for the sake of peace and the settlers' own security; this may also include the immediate dismantling of known notorious settlements.

The world has been shocked and horrified by the Hebron massacres and has awaited anxiously the Council's pronouncement of its reaction. Now, after a delay of some three weeks, during which the Council has expended considerable energy in back-and-forth deliberations, advances and retreats, we have before us a draft resolution which my delegation feels is unequal to the enormity of the circumstances. It could have been more assertive, forthright and substantial. Certainly, a quicker, more immediate and timely Council reaction would have reflected the world's indignation and transmitted a far less muddled signal, with a more meaningful impact. Unfortunately, the Council's delayed reaction at this crucial time can only damage its credibility, to say nothing of the peace process and its key players. Nevertheless, we support this draft resolution, which, to all intents and purposes, will have a mandatory effect, like any other resolution adopted by the Security Council.

Finally, the level of tension in the area has been and continues to be a clear danger to international peace and security, and my delegation strongly feels that the international community, and particularly those with a continuing national interest in the region, have a right as well as a duty to express real concern. Peace talks should continue, which is why we welcome the initiative quickly seized by the United States in throwing its enormous weight behind the process. However, these talks must not remain in a vacuum - undeterred and unaffected by the daily events which control the lives of the ordinary Palestinians. This cannot continue to be an internal "tale of two cities" in the occupied territories, with one set of inhabitants functioning under one set of rules and laws, affording them a separate and presumed higher status, while the vast bulk of the Palestinians suffer under repressive practices, reprisals against communities, and arbitrary treatment - all in contravention of recognized norms of international law. As the occupying Power, Israel has the primary, indeed the sole, responsibility to maintain a climate of fairness, legality and security for all inhabitants, so that a spirit of genuine cooperation is engendered and rapid and real progress is made toward implementing the accord on Palestinian self-rule. For the time being, the Israeli Government and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) have the controls in their hands, but if we delay until there is another Hebron in the West Bank, there may be too many drivers at the controls to steer in the direction of real peace.

Mr. Al-Khussaiby (Oman): Allow me at the outset, Sir, to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the current month. Your wide experience and professional skills guarantee the success of our work. My delegation assures you of our fullest cooperation, and we look forward to working closely with you in facing the important and difficult tasks that lie ahead.

Let me also take this opportunity to express our sincere felicitations to your predecessor, Ambassador Olhaye of the Republic of Djibouti, on his remarkable work last month. Without any doubt, he discharged his duties as President for February in the most able and exemplary manner, and with exceptional skills. We wish to congratulate him on a job very well done.

We are gathered here today in this body in order to discuss a very dangerous situation and a horrendous crime which was committed in the Mosque of Ibrahim in the city of Hebron during the early hours of Friday, 25 February 1994, and which resulted in the massacre of nearly 60 and the wounding of between 200 and 300 innocent Palestinian civilians.

My Government has already condemned, and continues to condemn, this hideous and revolting crime that was committed in a sacred place of worship during the holy month of Ramadan, which has special meaning for all Muslims all over the world. I wish to convey our heartfelt condolences to our brothers and sisters, the Palestinian people, and to the bereaved families.

We hope that this incident in itself will not affect the peace process that is currently taking place, which my Government fully supports and which is also considered by the international community as the most appropriate political channel to bring an end to the Middle East crisis, and a lasting solution to it. My delegation takes this opportunity to commend the Secretary-General for his tireless efforts on this issue and on many others.

What happened on 25 February 1994 has compelled us to question, once again, the role of the Israeli occupying authority in protecting the Palestinians in the occupied Arab territories. The Israeli occupying authority is called upon, more than ever before, to protect the Palestinians in all their lands which have been occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, in accordance with the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. Therefore, the Security Council should call on the Israeli occupying authority to take immediate and vital measures that will guarantee the safety and protection of the Palestinian civilians, in conformity with Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 681 (1990).

We have been looking forward since the perpetration of this horrendous massacre to the assumption by the Security Council of its full responsibility in facing up to this unjustifiable act of aggression by adopting an appropriate resolution that would match the gravity of this incident and would lead to the protection of the rights of the Palestinian people, as well as the Islamic and Christian holy places under illegal occupation. This would pave the way for the achievement of a lasting and comprehensive settlement of this issue on the basis of international norms and all relevant Security Council resolutions issued within the context of the current peace process. Regrettably, due to the sluggish response of the Security Council in issuing a resolution, the numbers of victims have increased to a certain extent, scores of them having been killed by the Israeli aggressors.

In conclusion, my country believes that the contents of the draft resolution under discussion contain the most simple and basic rights necessary for the protection of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories. In this context, we confirm that the draft resolution which we are about to adopt will have the same mandatory effect as all other resolutions adopted by this Council; we hope that there will be immediate arrangements to protect the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. Therefore, my delegation will vote in favour of this resolution, whether paragraph by paragraph or as a whole.

The President (*interpretation from French*): I thank the representative of Oman for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Gambari (Nigeria): The Nigerian Government and people join others in condemning the outrageous massacre of Muslims who were worshipping peacefully at the Mosque of Abraham in Hebron, which occurred on Friday, 25 February 1994, during the holy month of Ramadan. By that horrific incident, the international community was confronted once again not only with the horrendous manifestation of hate and of bigotry, but with the challenge of forging a climate of peace and mutual co-existence in the Middle East, which have been so painfully lacking so far. My Government is hard pressed for words to describe the outrage and the sorrow which we share with the families of those who were murdered in cold blood. We hope that the horror and indignation which the incident has understandably evoked will be followed by an appropriate response on the part of the authorities concerned so that such an incident is never again repeated.

My delegation is of the strong belief that the massacre at Hebron was not an isolated event. It was one of so many other tragic occurrences in the scenario of escalating violence which have been perpetrated by extremists in the region to demonstrate their opposition to the march towards peace which both the Israeli Government and the Palestine Liberation Organization courageously and effectively began by signing the historic agreement in September last year. These enemies of peace must not be allowed to succeed. Furthermore, religious extremism of whatever hue or persuasion must stand condemned.

The tragedy of 25 February 1994 must now propel the international community to accelerate its efforts to assist the

peace process in the region. There is no doubt that with the signing of the Israeli-PLO Agreement of September last year, the Middle East crisis entered a new phase: instead of the wider Arab-Israeli wars of the past, we now have localized but highly intensified and dangerous conflicts waged within the borders of the protagonists' countries. The international community should now strive to defuse existing tension between foes and neighbours by pursuing measures which would help to win much-needed confidence and commitment to the peace process.

My delegation believes very strongly that the pursuit of peace through dialogue is the only viable option for the PLO and the Government of Israel. The international community will be failing in its duty if it does not impress upon both parties the wisdom and necessity of this option so that an early agreement can soon be reached by them in implementing the Declaration of Principles signed by both the Government of Israel and the PLO on 13 September 1993.

In conclusion, my delegation believes that it is only fair and just that, as the occupying Power, the Government of Israel has a special responsibility to ensure that the Palestinians are given a greater sense and assurance of their security. The present situation, whereby heavily-armed extremist Israeli settlers live side by side with unarmed Palestinians, is intolerable, and therefore unacceptable. Therefore, the following measures should, in our opinion, be taken immediately, if some of them have not been taken already:

(a) A crack-down on all extremist groups in the occupied territories;

(b) The disarming of the settlers, especially those known to harbour extremist tendencies;

(c) The acceleration of the process of negotiation so that the Israeli-PLO agreement can be finalized without any further delay;

(d) The imposition of United Nations observer or peacekeeping forces in the conflict areas of the occupied territories to monitor human rights observance as well as providing a confidence-building mechanism and a bridge of understanding; and

(e) The speeding-up of the fulfillment of all due processes which will accord to the Palestinian people its legitimate national rights.

Finally, our point of view having thus been expressed, and as a co-sponsor, my delegation will support the adoption of this draft resolution.

Mr. Yañez Barnuevo (Spain) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Spanish Government has already expressed its profound consternation at the horrible tragedy of 25 February last, which caused the death of some 50 persons and wounded over 100 among Palestinian worshippers who were participating in the prayer ceremony on Ramadan Friday in the Sanctuary of Abraham, Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi, in the Cave of the Patriarchs in the West Bank town of Hebron.

The Spanish Government condemned in the most forceful terms this ruthless act of terrorism, which merits the firm and unanimous repudiation of international public opinion, as did the European Union in its statement of 26 February, as well as in a statement that was made before this Council on 2 March 1994 by the Permanent Representative of Greece on behalf of the European Union and its member States.

While the murder of innocent persons is always a condemnable act, one which is directed against a group of people devoted to prayer in a holy place for the simple fact of their belonging to a different people, a different religion, produces in us a feeling of particular revulsion. There can be no doubt that, whoever may have been responsible for the murder, the massacre that we condemn took place in an atmosphere of violence and fanaticism of tragic resonance.

We have taken good note of the statements made by the Israeli authorities, including President Weizman and Prime Minister Rabin, regretting what occurred, condemning the tragic event and conveying their condolences to the President of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Mr. Arafat. We welcome the measures adopted by the Israeli Government in the exercise of its inalienable responsibility to ensure the security and protection of all inhabitants of the occupied territories and, specifically, of Palestinian civilians whose homes and homeland are there. These measures, which constitute a first step in the right direction, must be complemented and must be implemented with all due diligence.

We believe that it is urgently necessary to conduct an impartial and complete investigation in order to clarify where responsibility lies for this attack. We also believe that every necessary step must be taken in order to avoid the recurrence of similar acts. We take note of the decision of the Israeli Government to establish a commission of

investigation, and we will be following its work with interest. It is particularly necessary that effective measures be taken to control all extremist elements among the Israeli settlers in the occupied territories, especially measures aimed at preventing the undue use of weapons.

In this regard, we note with satisfaction the decision of the Government of Israel to declare illegal the Kach and Kahane Chai organizations.

The Government of Spain is convinced that the relaunching of the peace process and the prompt implementation of the Declaration of Principles signed in Washington on 13 September 1993 between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization are the only viable alternatives to violence and confrontation. We believe that only the acceleration and speedy conclusion of the current negotiations, aimed at a prompt Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and the area of Jericho and the establishment of Palestinian autonomy will make it possible to put an end to the continuous and alarming deterioration of the situation in the occupied territories. In this regard, we welcome the invitation from the President of the United States to the heads of the Israeli and Palestinian delegations to come to Washington with a view to jump-starting the negotiating process.

In this context, an appeal must be made to the Israeli authorities urgently to take and implement measures to guarantee the safety and protection of the Palestinians in the occupied territories, including Jerusalem, in conformity with the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 concerning the protection of civilian populations in occupied areas.

In the present circumstances, we believe that the presence of international observers in the occupied territories is appropriate as an important confidence-building measure to facilitate implementation of the Declaration of Principles. We encourage the parties to reach agreement as soon as possible on the composition and modalities of that temporary international presence, in which the European Union has expressed its readiness to participate, as reflected in the declaration adopted by its Council of Ministers on 7 March, and to which the United Nations might also be able to contribute.

The members of this Council know from experience that every peace process goes through critical moments at which it is necessary to overcome obstacles thrown up by extremists of various types who are determined to impose their fanatical ideas on the majority wishes of a population.

Spain believes that the draft resolution, of which we are co-sponsors, and which the Council is ready to adopt, duly reflects the range of measures that we have outlined, aimed at ensuring the security of the population in the occupied territories and at making it possible for the peace process to resume. The adoption and speedy implementation of this draft resolution is the best response we can offer to an act of terrorism whose ultimate objective was to destroy the process of reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians.

Mr. Bizimana (Rwanda) *(interpretation from French)*: I should like to take this opportunity to stress that, following the appalling massacre of Palestinians at Hebron on 25 February my Government again wishes to join in conveying the deepest condolences and feelings of solidarity to the Palestinian people at this time of pain, anguish and sorrow. My country also wishes again strongly to condemn this criminal act, which took the lives of innocent people at prayer during the month of Ramadan.

This premeditated massacre, planned and carried out by Israeli settlers, is all the more regrettable in that it came at a time when the international community was mobilizing to accelerate the peace process undertaken in the search for a solution to the question of the Middle East, at whose core is the problem of Palestine. We therefore call upon Israel to take effective and urgent measures to put an immediate end to acts of violence against Palestinians in the occupied territories.

It is for this very obvious reason that the draft resolution, which the Council is about to adopt, and the international presence in the occupied territories which it calls for deserve to be acted upon urgently in order to guarantee the conditions of security which this alarming situation demands.

Furthermore, we believe that, as the occupying Power, Israel must fulfil its obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention, of 12 August 1949, relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. On this basis, Israel must consider disarming the Israeli settlers, with the further aim of implementing all the other relevant resolutions of the Security Council.

My delegation also remains convinced that any lasting solution to the violent situation requires Palestinian autonomy and the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the

occupied territories. In this context, we would encourage the parties concerned to make a firm commitment to the peace process through the negotiation process, whose next stage, but for the horrendous event in Hebron, was to begin in Washington on 28 February. At the same time, we exhort the parties to specify the arrangements for implementing the Declaration of Principles signed on 13 September 1993 by the Israeli Government and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

We call upon the international community to spare no effort in support of the peace process and to discourage by all means any barbaric act designed to undermine the climate of security and tranquillity which is vital at this critical stage of the peace process in the Middle East.

I wish particularly to stress that success will depend above all on a constructive attitude, marked by the maximum restraint and a keen sense of responsibility by the parties concerned, both at the negotiating table and through their actions, to promote a genuine determination to abide by commitments they have entered into.

Finally, my delegation fully supports this draft resolution, of which it is a co-sponsor.

Mr. Li Zhaoxing (China) *(interpretation from Chinese):* On 25 February a very tragic massacre committed by a Jewish settler occurred in Hebron, in the West Bank, killing and wounding hundreds of innocent Palestinians. The Chinese Government is deeply shocked by this extreme act of terrorism and violence, and expresses its strong condemnation of it. The Chinese delegation wishes to ask the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations to convey its profound condolences and sympathy to the State of Palestine and through it to the bereaved families. We call on the Israeli Government to take all measures necessary to put an end to such atrocities.

This incident has shown once again that with the question of Palestine still unresolved it is very difficult to avoid such atrocities completely, and that there will be no tranquillity and peace in the Middle East. The international community and the parties concerned should recognize the urgency and sensitivity of this question and continue without delay to make tireless efforts to find a comprehensive, fair and reasonable solution to the Palestinian question.

It is the consistent position of the Chinese Government that a political solution to the question of the occupied Arab territories should be sought on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions, that the occupied Arab territories should be returned and that the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people should be restored. The Chinese Government will, as always, continue to support the Palestinian people in their just cause for the restoration of their legitimate national rights and will promote the peace process in the Middle East.

The Declaration of Principles signed by the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel last year marks a breakthrough in the Middle East peace process and is an important step towards the harmonious coexistence of the Arab and Jewish nations. This progress is hard-won. The peace process in the Middle East is now at a crucial juncture, and we should not fall short of success for lack of a final effort. We sincerely hope that the parties concerned will practise restraint and adopt a calm and sensible attitude to remove existing obstacles, actively create desirable conditions and speed up their peace talks so as to achieve an early and comprehensive peace, to which the various ethnic communities in the Middle East ardently aspire.

Mr. Marker (Pakistan): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the duties of the President of the Security Council. The skill and wisdom with which you are discharging your responsibilities are attributes of a diplomat of your experience, skill and erudition, which will ensure the success of the work of the Council. My delegation will continue to extend to you its fullest cooperation and support in your very important task.

I should also like to take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Roble Olhaye, the Permanent Representative of Djibouti, for the robust and dedicated manner, as well as the helpful and constructive spirit, with which he guided the work of the Council during February.

At the meeting of the Security Council held on 28 February I expressed the sense of shock and outrage of the Government and the people of Pakistan at the massacre of the Palestinians who were at prayer in the Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi Mosque in the town of Al-Khalil - Hebron - in the occupied Palestinian territory. My delegation also urged the Council to take urgent measures to compel the Israeli authorities to punish the culprits and to ensure the safety and security of the Palestinians living in the occupied territories.

Subsequently my delegation has actively participated, in its own capacity and also as the Chairman of the Organization of the Islamic Conference Group in New York, in the negotiations to arrive at a suitable

Security Council resolution in the wake of the 25 February massacre of the Palestinians. These negotiations have led to the preparation of the draft resolution which is finally before us today after many delays. My delegation is honoured to be a co-sponsor of this draft resolution, along with other members of the non-aligned caucus of the Security Council.

We believe that the draft resolution contains a number of important elements, and hope that its implementation will not only help to bring a certain sense of security to the Palestinians living in the occupied territories, but will also serve to bring about a less hostile atmosphere than that which exists at present. An international presence, as envisaged in the draft resolution, will greatly assist in this process.

We also sincerely hope that the passage of the draft resolution will restart the peace process, which has been so cynically and brutally interrupted by the massacre at the Al-Ibrahimi Mosque. We strongly believe that the renewed negotiations, if they are to be meaningful, can no longer proceed on the earlier assumptions and premises. The massacre in Hebron has explosively demonstrated the necessity for a change in outlook and in the pattern and concept of the negotiations. The issue of the illegal Israeli settlements, hitherto consigned to solution at a subsequent stage, is now a subject for immediate consideration.

It is imperative that the negotiations and the measures envisaged under the Declaration of Principles of 13 September 1993 be undertaken at the earliest possible moment, and that the peace process get under way in a realistic atmosphere which combines flexibility with purposefulness. It is only through a just and durable peace that the people of this war-ravaged region can hope to derive the benefits of their fundamental rights. And it is only through the attainment of such a just peace that the world at large can pay homage to the martyrs of the Al-Ibrahimi Mosque.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I thank the representative of Pakistan for the kind words he addressed to me.

The Council will now proceed to vote on the draft resolution paragraph by paragraph.

I shall now put the first preambular paragraph to the vote.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Brazil, China, Czech Republic, Djibouti, France, New Zealand, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President *(interpretation from French):* There were 15 votes in favour. The first preambular paragraph has been adopted unanimously.

I shall now put the second preambular paragraph to the vote.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Brazil, China, Czech Republic, Djibouti, France, New Zealand, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Against

None

Abstaining:

United States of America

The President *(interpretation from French):* The result of the voting is as follows: 14 in favour, none against and 1 abstention. The second preambular paragraph has been adopted.

I shall now put the third preambular paragraph to the vote.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Brazil, China, Czech Republic, Djibouti, France, New Zealand, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President *(interpretation from French):* There were 15 votes in favour. The third preambular paragraph has been adopted unanimously.

I shall now put the fourth preambular paragraph to the vote.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Brazil, China, Czech Republic, Djibouti, France, New Zealand, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President *(interpretation from French):* There were 15 votes in favour. The fourth preambular paragraph has been adopted unanimously.

I shall now put the fifth preambular paragraph to the vote.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Brazil, China, Czech Republic, Djibouti, France, New Zealand, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President *(interpretation from French):* There were 15 votes in favour. The fifth preambular paragraph has been adopted unanimously.

I shall now put the sixth preambular paragraph to the vote.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Brazil, China, Czech Republic, Djibouti, France, New Zealand, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Against:

None

Abstaining:

United States of America

The President *(interpretation from French):* The result of the voting is as follows: 14 in favour, none against and 1 abstention. The sixth preambular paragraph has been adopted.

I shall now put operative paragraph 1 to the vote.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Brazil, China, Czech Republic, Djibouti, France, New Zealand, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President *(interpretation from French):* There were 15 votes in favour. Operative paragraph 1 has been adopted unanimously.

I shall now put operative paragraph 2 to the vote.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Brazil, China, Czech Republic, Djibouti, France, New Zealand, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President *(interpretation from French):* There were 15 votes in favour. Operative paragraph 2 has been adopted unanimously.

I shall now put operative paragraph 3 to the vote.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Brazil, China, Czech Republic, Djibouti, France, New Zealand, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President *(interpretation from French):* There were 15 votes in favour. Operative paragraph 3 has been adopted unanimously.

I shall now put operative paragraph 4 to the vote.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Brazil, China, Czech Republic, Djibouti, France, New Zealand, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Spain, United

Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President *(interpretation from French):* There were 15 votes in favour. Operative paragraph 4 has been adopted unanimously.

I shall now put operative paragraph 5 to the vote.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Brazil, China, Czech Republic, Djibouti, France, New Zealand, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. Operative paragraph 5 has been adopted unanimously.

The Council will now proceed to take a decision on the draft resolution in document S/1994/280 as a whole. It is my understanding that the Council wishes to adopt the draft resolution as a whole without putting it to the vote. If there is no objection, I shall declare the draft resolution adopted.

As I see no objection, it is so decided.

The draft resolution has been adopted as resolution 904 (1994).

I shall now call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mrs. Albright (United States of America): Council members are conscious of the difficult situation that the Middle East now faces. Leaders of courage on both sides of the Arab-Israeli conflict have taken the decision to end the decades of bloodshed and make peace. A historic step was taken last 13 September, when Israel and the PLO signed the Declaration of Principles and Prime Minister Rabin and Chairman Arafat shook hands. The international community and the United Nations expressed their overwhelming support for this extraordinary act of reconciliation.

Since then, as negotiators have acted in good faith to try to reach agreement on implementation of the Declaration of Principles, extremists on both sides have resorted to violence and terrorism to kill the peace. Thirty-three Israelis have been killed - innocent victims of Palestinian extremists. And on 25 February, in the holy month of Ramadan, in the city of Hebron, more than 30 innocent Palestinians were gunned down by an Israeli extremist settler as they bowed in prayer in the Mosque of Ibrahim.

The world community reacted with revulsion. The Prime Minister of Israel spoke for his nation when he condemned the action, expressed his shame and took swift action to investigate the crime and prevent its recurrence. At the time President Clinton expressed the outrage of the American people at this horrific act of murder, and we join other members of the Council today in condemning the massacre in the strongest possible terms.

My Government is determined not to allow extremists and terrorists to undermine or disrupt the peace process. They are bent on dragging Israelis and Palestinians back into the darkness of unending conflict and bloodshed. We have a collective responsibility to the people of the Middle East and to the international community to prevent them from extinguishing the hope of a normal, peaceful life.

There is only one answer to Hebron. It lies in the call that the Council has issued today to Israel and the PLO to redouble their efforts to bring their negotiations to a prompt conclusion and begin the implementation of their agreement as rapidly as possible. The United States, together with its Russian co-sponsor, stands ready to do all it can to facilitate this objective.

It is precisely to serve and protect the peace process that my Government has - with great reluctance - made the difficult decision to allow this resolution to pass today, despite the existence of some language we find objectionable. For today in Washington my Government has announced several steps that will serve to restart the stalled Middle East peace process. First, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon have agreed to resume bilateral negotiations with Israel in April. Secondly, and of particular importance to the resolution we are discussing today, Israel and the PLO have had intensive discussions at the highest levels. They have finally agreed to convene a senior-level meeting, the timing of which will be announced in the days ahead.

The United States supports the operative paragraphs of the resolution that the Council has just adopted. However, we sought a paragraph-by-paragraph vote on this resolution because we wanted to record our objections to language introduced there. Had this language appeared in

the operative paragraphs of the resolution, let me be clear: we would have exercised our veto. In fact, we are today voting against a resolution in the Commission on the Status of Women precisely because it implies that Jerusalem is "occupied Palestinian territory".

We simply do not support the description of the territories occupied by Israel in the 1967 war as "occupied Palestinian territory". In the view of my Government, this language could be taken to indicate sovereignty, a matter which both Israel and the PLO have agreed must be decided in negotiations on the final status of the territories. As agreed between them, those negotiations will begin not later than two years after the implementation of the Declaration of Principles.

Similarly, while my Government reaffirms our view that the Fourth Geneva Convention, of 12 August 1949, applies to territories occupied by Israel since 1967, we oppose the specific reference to Jerusalem in this resolution and will continue to oppose its insertion in future resolutions. As I have noted already, had this language been in the operative paragraphs, we would have vetoed the resolution.

The United States Government chose instead to disavow this language and express our opposition by abstaining on the second and sixth preambular paragraphs. We abstained on these paragraphs today because we want there to be no doubt about our condemnation of the massacre and because of our overriding concern to protect and promote the peace process and our desire to see negotiations resume very soon.

Jerusalem is one of the most sensitive issues to be addressed in the negotiations. As President Clinton stated on 16 March,

> "In terms of the resolution of Jerusalem, the position of the United States has not changed. But that is a matter for the parties to decide. And in accord with the declaration, it is something to be ultimately decided at a later point. That's what we think should be done."

Under the Declaration of Principles, it is an issue which Israel and the PLO have agreed will be dealt with in the final status negotiations. My Government does not believe that it is helpful to the negotiations to include the kind of reference that is made to Jerusalem in this resolution. It could prejudice or prejudge the outcome of the negotiations. The Security Council should respect the parties' agreement in this regard.

The United States asked for these unusual procedures this afternoon in order to make it clear - for all to see - that we cannot and will not support any effort by the Security Council to prejudice the outcome of the Middle East peace process. In this case, it is up to Israel and the Palestinians - not the United Nations - to make the hard decisions necessary for the promise of peace at the negotiating table to become the reality of peace on the ground.

The resolution also refers to measures to be taken to guarantee the safety and protection of Palestinian civilians, possibly to include a temporary international or foreign presence. The latter reference is to the provisions of the Declaration of Principles, which provide for the possibility of such a presence if agreed upon by the parties. If my Government can do something helpful in this area, we will seek to support the mutual wishes of the parties.

The resolution signals the will of the international community for peace in the Middle East. The objective of the United States and the Russian Federation, as co-sponsors, is to accelerate the negotiations and to try to bring them to a successful conclusion in the shortest possible time.

In conclusion, my Government is optimistic that the steps announced today in Washington to put the peace process back on track will lead to concrete achievements in negotiations between the parties. Without the confidence that the peace process will shortly resume, positive action on this resolution would not have been possible today.

I know that my colleagues share my hopes that some day soon the promise we all felt watching the momentous handshake last September can be realized.

Mr. Vorontsov (Russian Federation) *(interpretation from Russian):* The Russian Federation was alarmed to learn of the further outbreak of violence in the territories occupied by Israel, where a terrorist act by an Israeli settler caused the death or wounding of dozens of people in Hebron. This led to a sharp deterioration in the situation in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. There have been clashes between Israelis and Palestinians, resulting in further casualties.

Russia vigorously condemned this act of terror committed during prayers during the Muslim holy month of

Ramadan, and we have conveyed our condolences to the bereaved families and, indeed, to all Palestinians. All necessary measures must be taken to conduct an investigation and to prevent the recurrence of such events.

The Russian delegation notes that the ruthless act of violence in Hebron has been condemned by the leadership and major political parties of Israel. But that does not diminish the full responsibility of the Israeli Government and the need for it to act to prevent any flareup of violence. As members know, the Israeli Government is already taking a number of measures to that end.

We must note that this crime was committed precisely as work was being concluded on practical measures to implement the agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) on the establishment of interim self-government in Gaza and the Jericho area. Clearly, the criminal's target was not only defenceless people in the mosque but also the very possibility of a peaceful solution to the long-standing conflict in the Middle East.

As a co-sponsor of the Middle East peace process, along with the United States, Russia appeals to the Palestinians and the Israelis to exercise the maximum restraint and good sense to prevent the extremists from undermining the negotiating process. The Russian delegation believes that at this time, so critical for the fate of the Middle East, we must cooperate in taking urgent measures to sustain the peace process and give it a second wind. The situation demands further international encouragement for conciliation between Arabs and Israelis.

For its part, Russia has maintained constant contact with the Palestinian and Israeli leadership with a view to finding the best way for it to assist the parties to resume their peace negotiations. During his recent visit to Tunis and Tel Aviv, the Foreign Minister of Russia, Mr. Andrei Kozyrev, held important talks with the leadership of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. Russia is convinced that Israelis and Palestinians alike remain committed to a peace settlement. During the talks between Mr. Kozyrev and Mr. Yasser Arafat the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization consented in principle to the resumption of the negotiating process.

In the light of that decision, the Russian Federation believes that the prompt conclusion of talks between the PLO and Israel on the plan for Gaza and Jericho is of the highest priority. Following this, there must be immediate steps to implement the plan speedily. This would help reduce passions and would provide a further guarantee of security in the occupied territories.

For those reasons, we played an active role in preparing the draft resolution the Council has just adopted, and we joined other members in submitting that text in the belief that it would play an important part in the resumption of the peace process and in the implementation of all necessary measures in the interest of the prompt normalization of the situation in the occupied territories. It is unfortunate, however, that the Council did not react with the swiftness demanded by the circumstances.

The delegation of the Russian Federation stresses that the Council's adoption of this resolution on Hebron was an indispensable step, failing which the resumption of the negotiating process would be impossible. There is an understanding in principle on this point between the parties to the negotiating process, and between its sponsors. For its part, Russia, as a co-sponsor, is ready to bear its full share of responsibility in implementing today's resolution.

This is a critical moment for the negotiating process. The failure of that process would undoubtedly have grave consequences for the entire Middle East situation. All those upon whom progress at the negotiating table depends must recognize their responsibility before the world.

Mr. Kovanda (Czech Republic): Violence breeds violence; terror breeds terror. That, at least, is how the conventional wisdom would have it. Responding to terror with terror, to violence with violence, is the standard response, the intellectually undemanding response, the routine response: an eye for an eye, as it says in the Old Testament. Such a response does not require any great imagination, any great wisdom - not even any great courage.

On the other hand, efforts to break out of the ensuing vicious circle require nothing less than imagination, wisdom and courage. It is the courageous leader who will shepherd his people through the thorny thickets of violence and terror in search for peace and prosperity. It is by contrast the coward who will ambush them, afraid perhaps that the search for peace might fail or that peace might not suit him. And these fears, as he acts them out, turn into a self-fulfilling prophecy. He might even succeed in his peace-wrecking if the peace-seeking leaders lose heart.

There is a lunatic fringe in most societies. It is the role of the State to exercise control over this lunatic, extremist fringe, to protect all of the State's population in the elementary sense of protecting their lives and peace of mind. Last month Israel manifestly failed to do this. In our resolution we call upon Israel to take measures that would prevent further illegal violence by its settlers and that would guarantee the safety and protection of Palestinian civilians throughout the occupied territory. The Czech delegation welcomes the steps Israel has taken so far. Belated though they are for the victims of the Cave of the Patriarchs, they will, we hope, help prevent further tragedies.

My President, Mr. Václav Havel, has not failed to express how profoundly shaken and outraged he was by the massacre. He too hopes that stern consequences and appropriate security measures will follow the tragedy. And let me add here how despicable and incomprehensible we find the reactions of those of our fellow human beings who feel less than total revulsion at the massacre.

We are heartened by the obvious determination of all concerned that fear of peace should not turn into a self-fulfilling prophecy. Fortunately for the world, the leaders of both communities that pray in the Cave of the Patriarchs are demonstrating imagination, courage and wisdom. Fortunately for the world, they are not ready to give up their efforts. They have, on the contrary, taken steps to prevent last month's mass assassination from assassinating our hopes for peace.

And this is where we come in. For us, the international community, the main implication of this unspeakable horror is that we must be forward-looking. The main implication has to be that we must not surrender to the false vision of the cowardly lunatic, but, rather, must redouble our support for the true vision of the courageous leaders of both the Palestine Liberation Organization and the State of Israel as they blaze their path through the thorny thickets of violence and terror to the peace that surely awaits them at the end of the journey. In that effort they have the unflinching support of my country, which - and let me reiterate this - supports every one of the Security Council resolutions related to the occupied territories.

Meanwhile, we mourn, pray and lament with the bereaved relatives of the victims. An abyss of tragedy suddenly opened up in front of every one of them in their inconsolable sorrow. Every individual affected is working through his or her grief alone, and here there is precious little the international community can do other than to offer its deepest, most sincere sympathies. These I offer, in all humility, on behalf of the people and the Government of the Czech Republic.

This is where one could have comfortably ended this statement had it been delivered four weeks ago, or even perhaps three. However, the fact that the Security Council as a whole is managing to respond to the tragedy of Hebron only after four long weeks should give us pause for reflection. It has been the feeling of my delegation that the Council should have reacted immediately - whatever form an immediate response could have taken. But we have in effect allowed others to determine the form of our response, and then, logically and ineluctably, also its wording and its timing. In so doing we have, we feel, abdicated some of our responsibility, and my delegation fears that the reputation of the Security Council has consequently suffered.

Mr. Ricardes (Argentina)(*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation wishes to reiterate the condemnation already forcefully expressed by the Government of the Argentine Republic on Friday, 25 February, of the atrocious crime perpetrated in Hebron during the hour of prayer in the Mosque of Ibrahimi. We wish also to say that we share the understandable pain of the Palestinian people.

This inexplicable crime, whose aim was to rekindle the flame of hatred and intolerance between two peoples that had decided to embark on the path of reconciliation, showed that fanaticism and ignorance are but one step removed from death. It is obvious that neither sick and solitary individuals nor tiny groups that feed on resentment or anger can impose their will on peoples that want to live and grow in peace, in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

I wish to express my Government's renewed commitment - which is the commitment of the international community - to the peace process that is under way. Episodes such as the one with which we are dealing in fact only magnify the need to overcome violence and replace it most urgently with lasting and just peace. It is our fervent hope that calm will soon return to the minds of the people in the occupied territories, thus strengthening the resolve of those who so wisely initiated the peace process. In this context, we urgently appeal to the parties to pursue the efforts for peace with a view to seeking a definitive solution to the problem. We also wish to commend Israel on the series of concrete measures adopted on 27 February by the Government as a response to the events in Hebron.

The Argentine Republic has expressed its support for the resolution that we and all the other members of the Council have adopted, with the consensus of the international community. In it the massacre of Palestinians in Hebron is strongly condemned. It could not be otherwise. In the resolution the Council also reaffirms the international community's support for the peace process; recalls the fundamental duty of the occupying Power to guarantee fulfilment of the obligations and responsibilities explicitly incumbent upon it by virtue of the Fourth Geneva Convention, of 12 August 1949; and calls upon the parties to agree to the establishment of a foreign presence in the framework of the Declaration of Principles on provisions related to interim self-government and to its annex II.

Sir David Hannay (United Kingdom): My Government has already made clear how deeply we deplore the horrendous crime that was committed on 25 February in Hebron. The Prime Minister, John Major, has written to the Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) expressing the revulsion we feel at this massacre of innocent Palestinians; and he has conveyed, through Mr. Arafat, our condolences to the families of the victims. At times like this words are never adequate to convey the full depth of the sympathy we feel, nor our shock that innocent worshippers should be murdered in a holy place.

The delay in adopting the resolution is regrettable, but it does not reflect any lack of concern about the situation by any of the members of the Security Council. On the contrary, the delay was caused by the need to resolve satisfactorily a number of very difficult and sensitive issues. Disunity in the Council suits nobody but the extremists on both sides.

My Government remains convinced that this outrage must not be allowed to put at risk the peace process. That was the intention of the gunman. He must not be allowed to succeed. What happened in Hebron only serves to underline the importance of a just, lasting and comprehensive settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Unimagined progress has been achieved over the last year. The parties now need to make the extra effort to bring the negotiations to an early and successful conclusion. There could be no better way of showing that acts of terrorism will not be allowed to prevail than to implement the Declaration of Principles without further delay.

My Government believes that an international civilian presence in the occupied territories would indeed usefully contribute to improving the safety and protection of the Palestinian inhabitants. Something along these lines was foreseen in the Declaration of Principles. The Foreign Secretary has already made clear that if there were to be an international observer presence in the occupied territories the United Kingdom would not be absent. And European Union Foreign Ministers meeting in Brussels on 7 March expressed their support for an international presence and declared the European Union's willingness to participate. We believe that the work of the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa could provide a good model for such an international presence. We hope that the parties concerned will be able to reach agreement on such an international presence as soon as possible.

But it is important not to promise more than we can deliver. My Government takes the firm view that it is the responsibility of the Israeli authorities to provide protection for all the inhabitants of the occupied territories. They must act urgently to bring to an end all acts of violence, in line with their obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention. An international presence could help defuse tension, but it could not be a substitute for the Israeli authorities.

In conclusion, my Government very much welcomes the adoption of this resolution, and hopes that it will facilitate efforts to ensure an early resumption of the peace process.

Mr. Keating (New Zealand): New Zealand was appalled by the senseless and tragic event which took place in Hebron three weeks ago. The massacre of worshippers in a shrine transgresses every bound of decency, morality and humanity. New Zealand extends its deepest condolences to the families of those who died, and to the people of Hebron, whose city has been visited by this awful tragedy.

We are disappointed that it has taken this long for the Security Council to respond to this tragedy, but we are pleased that the Israeli Government has recognized the need to take strong measures as a consequence of this incident. We commend the establishment of a commission of inquiry and the action that has been taken to outlaw two of the more extremist groups whose presence in the occupied territories is a continuing complication to the search for peace and whose tactics are nothing short of terrorism.

At the same time, we believe it is imperative that Israel, as the occupying Power, comply with all its obligations under international law. Under the Fourth Geneva Convention, Israel must take effective action to stop extremists from committing mayhem upon the civilian

population. It must guarantee the safety and protection of all of the civilian population of the occupied territories.

We understand and sympathize with the concerns of the Palestinians to have some form of international presence in the territories as a means of safeguarding against further atrocities.

In recent months, Israelis and Palestinians have charted a new way forward. The intentions of those who wish to frustrate that process must not be allowed to prevail. Peace must not and cannot be destroyed by the violent actions of an individual or those who support him. The surest means of guaranteeing that such incidents are not perpetuated is to bring the peace negotiations to a successful conclusion. Difficult as it may be to negotiate in the aftermath of such a bloody incident, we urge the parties to the peace process to resume their talks quickly. To fail to do so would be to hand victory to the extremists who oppose a peaceful resolution of the problems of the Middle East.

We are therefore very heartened at the news that Palestinian and Israeli leaders are to meet soon. We hope that this will pave the way for the fulfilment of the historic agreement that was reached in Washington last September. We call for a strengthened commitment to the Declaration of Principles. From this point on, it is essential in our view that delays in negotiations be avoided. We have seen that such delays cause deadlines to be missed and erode confidence in the peace process, and are thus damaging in themselves.

Mr. Sardenberg (Brazil): The delegation of Brazil has lent its support to resolution 904 (1994), just adopted by the Security Council, as a clear demonstration of its revulsion at the appalling massacre of peaceful Palestinian worshippers in the Mosque of Abraham in Hebron on 25 February 1994 during the month of Ramadan.

On the very day of that tragic event, the Government of Brazil issued the following press communiqué:

> "Deeply shocked by the terrorist attack which killed more than 50 Palestinians as they were praying in a mosque in the city of Hebron in the Israeli occupied territories, the Government and people of Brazil express their indignation and strong condemnation of such an unacceptable act of brutality.
>
> "Brazil trusts that the Government of Israel will be prepared to take the necessary measures to ensure the prevention of new acts of violence and stresses once again the need for moderation and restraint so that the peace process can be accelerated and be concluded for the benefit of all the peoples of the region."

Brazil associates itself with the universal condemnation of this outrageous massacre as we offer our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and to the Palestinian people. At the same time, we continue to express our support for the continuation of the peace process currently under way and we appeal to all parties to pursue vigorously the implementation of the Declaration of Principles signed by the Government of Israel and by the Palestine Liberation Organization on 13 September 1993 in Washington. Brazil fervently hopes that terrorist acts such as this one will not be allowed to succeed in derailing the peace process so painstakingly nurtured by the parties. At the same time, Brazil joins with other delegations in calling upon the Government of Israel to guarantee the safety and protection of Palestinian civilians throughout the occupied territories, including, inter alia, through a temporary international or foreign presence, which was provided for in the Declaration of Principles, within the context of the ongoing peace process. The Government of Israel should also take firm and immediate measures, including the confiscation of arms, to bring an end to the illegal acts of violence by the Israeli settlers.

The President (*interpretation from French*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of France.

The feelings of horror and indignation unanimously aroused by the Hebron massacre prompted the Council to meet urgently to debate the situation and to examine the measures necessary to continue the peace process, at the same time as discussions were in progress on its formal reaction, whereby it would voice its condemnation and make its decisions public.

France, for its part, immediately condemned with the utmost vigour this act of terrorism, committed in a place of prayer, and called upon the parties to rise above their legitimate feelings so that the positive developments of recent months should not be called into question. My Government has been in contact with the parties to facilitate the resumption of the dialogue and the adoption of the necessary measures for the restoration of confidence. It has also repeatedly insisted that the Council take an official

stand as soon as possible. The understandable feelings of the Palestinian civilian population indeed called for a prompt reaction.

The Israeli authorities' strong condemnation of this massacre, as well as the urgent measures decided upon by the Israeli cabinet, constitute a first step in the right direction, in particular the measures designed to disarm and control the extremist settlers and to establish a commission of enquiry to shed light on all the circumstances of this tragedy. As my authorities have repeatedly stressed, it is for the Government of Israel to do everything possible to guarantee the security of the Palestinian civilian population.

My delegation welcomes the adoption of resolution 904 (1994), of which it is a sponsor. It condemns, without the slightest ambiguity, the massacre in the Mosque of Abraham. It calls upon the Government of Israel to fulfil its responsibilities in the occupied territories, including Jerusalem, pursuant to the terms of the Fourth Geneva Convention. My Government attaches particular importance to provisions recommending that measures to protect Palestinian civilians be taken, in particular through a temporary foreign or international presence in accordance with the terms of the Declaration of Principles of 13 September 1993. That presence could, for example, take the form of the dispatch of civilian observers of the United Nations with a monitoring and verification mission, the details of which remain to be defined.

My Government is anxious that the Hebron massacre should not be allowed to call into question the peace process and the progress it has made. That is why the provisions which urge the parties to step up the peace negotiations in order to implement as soon as possible the Declaration of Principles of 13 September 1993 seem to it to be of the greatest importance. In this regard, we believe that the question of settlements and their possible regrouping must be the subject of negotiations. Furthermore, to avoid the recurrence of any similar tragedy, thought should be given to disarming settlers when they move outside the settlements in the occupied territories. Finally, this process should be accompanied by confidence-building measures such as the continuing freeing of prisoners in addition to what has already been done.

The massacre at the Cave of the Patriarchs constitutes a further attempt on the part of certain extremists to thwart the prospects of peace between the Arabs and the Israelis. It is imperative that we do not allow ourselves to be dragged into the vicious circle of confrontation.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I call on the representative of Israel.

Mr. Yaacobi (Israel): At the outset, Sir, I should like to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. I have no doubt that your wealth of diplomatic experience and personal skills will be of invaluable assistance in conducting the affairs of the Council.

Israel believes that all sides should dedicate themselves from now on to resuming and accelerating the peace process. This is the only way to change the reality and create a new future for Israelis, Palestinians and the neighboring Arab States.

Therefore, we share the Security Council's support for the peace process currently under way, and call for the implementation of the Declaration of Principles, signed by Israel and the PLO, without delay.

My Government welcomes the steps announced today to put the peace process back on track soon. The letters of invitation to the Madrid Peace Conference, sent by the co-sponsors to the participants on 18 October 1991, constitute the terms of reference upon which the peace process is based. Within this framework, Israel and the PLO signed the Declaration of Principles on 13 September 1993, as well as the Cairo Agreement on 9 February 1994. We believe that we have to act within the framework of the agreed peace process and those agreements.

Security must be guaranteed for all residents of the territories, Jews and Arabs alike. We can best achieve this by implementing the Declaration of Principles, Article VIII of which stipulates:

> "In order to guarantee public order and internal security for the Palestinians of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the Council will establish a strong police force, while Israel will continue to carry the responsibility for defending against external threats, as well as the responsibility for overall security of Israelis for the purpose of safeguarding their internal security and public order."

The Declaration of Principles provides for the possibility of a temporary international or foreign presence, as agreed

upon. We maintain that nothing in the present resolution prejudices this provision in the Declaration of Principles.

Following the tragic event which took place in Hebron on 25 February, Israel strongly condemned this massacre, this murder, and took some unprecedented measures. At its weekly meeting on Sunday, 13 March 1994, the Government of Israel declared that the Kach and Kahane Chai movements are terrorist organizations. This announcement applies to these organizations as well as to any group of people acting to achieve aims of the nature which the aforementioned groups have been working to achieve.

The Government of Israel also reaffirmed that at present, as in the past, it is solely responsible, by means of the Israel Defence Forces and the Israel Police, for the security of all inhabitants, Jewish and Arab, of the territories. The Government of Israel intends to take all measures necessary to ensure security within the boundaries of the law.

The Government of Israel stated that, with the completion of the negotiations on the Gaza-Jericho agreement, a Palestinian police force will be established which will take responsibility for the security of the Arab residents of those areas. During the transition period the necessary measures will be taken to ensure that a security vacuum is not created.

The reference to Jerusalem in this resolution is not compatible with the Declaration of Principles, whereby both parties have agreed to address the issue not later than the beginning of the third year of the interim period. The reference to Jerusalem in the resolution is also at variance with Israel's position regarding the city's present and future status: Jerusalem will remain united under Israeli sovereignty as our eternal capital.

Israel has suffered from terrorism throughout the years of its existence, yet we have never abandoned our quest for peace. Now, too, Israel remains fully committed to advancing towards peace on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), and the Declaration of Principles signed by Israel and the PLO.

Time is precious. We should not miss this historic opportunity. We call upon the Palestinians and all other participants in the negotiations - Syria, Jordan and Lebanon - to return to the peace talks in order to carry on with the essential task of establishing peace and security in our region.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I thank the representative of Israel for his kind words addressed to me.

I now call on the Permanent Observer of Palestine.

Mr. Al-Kidwa (Palestine) *(interpretation from Arabic):* Although this question has been before the Council for a long time, this is the first time I have made a statement to the Council this month. It is my pleasure, Sir, to extend to you our sincere congratulations on your assumption of the presidency, as the representative of France, a friendly and glorious country. Your wisdom and views have made a great difference in the results achieved by the Council today. We give you credit for that. We also thank Ambassador Olhaye, Permanent Representative of sisterly Djibouti, for his able stewardship of the Council last month.

I would also like to offer our thanks and appreciation to the members of the Security Council for adopting this important resolution, resoluion 904 (1994). We worked hard with them, including the co-sponsors of the Middle East peace process, to remove all obstacles and problems in connection with the adoption of this resolution. In this respect, we convey special thanks to the non-aligned members of the Council for all the valuable support and assistance they have given us.

At the same time, we cannot but note that three weeks have elapsed since the appalling massacre of our people in Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi in Al-Khalil. This lengthy delay has undoubtedly generated a great deal of suspicion and many questions among the Palestinian people and in the Arab region as a whole with regard to the Council's desire - or, for that matter, its ability, because of the position of a permanent member - effectively to fulfil its responsibilities with the required speed when it comes to the question of Palestine and the situation in the Middle East. We hope that the future will see a reversal of this picture.

Before setting out our understanding of today's resolution and its place in the overall context of the situation in the Middle East, we would like to draw members' attention to two important issues. The first concerns events in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, since the massacre and the emerging facts about the massacre itself. The repressive measures of the occupying authorities, particularly the Israeli army, against our people in the occupied territory are continuing unabated. Such measures include extensive curfews and

indiscriminate shooting, which have resulted in a number of deaths and injuries exceeding the casualties resulting from the massacre itself. We strongly demand the immediate cessation of all these illegitimate practices, which the Council has condemned repeatedly.

To the emerging details about the massacre itself - including the sudden and suspicious absence of the Israeli security elements at the beginning of the massacre and their participation in the shooting afterwards, and the policies implemented by the security forces of Israel, the occupying Power, with regard to the Israeli settlers - confirm once again the validity of our general position that the massacre and all other heinous manifestations are simply the natural outcome of the ideology and mentality of settler colonialism in our Palestinian land.

The problem, then, is the illegal presence of settlers on our land. This cannot be reduced to the presence of extremist settlers only, in spite of the fact that they are the worst, and it definitely cannot be reduced to Mr. Baruch Goldstein, in spite of the fact that he has become the symbol of the problem, both in its origins and in its outcome. Thus there can be no serious or real solutions to this problem without the adoption of new policies aimed at the reversal of the situation existing today and, at a later stage, the dismantlement of the settlements.

The second issue, which we raise as a result of discussions which have taken place here in the Council and which have been tainted by disinformation, regards the reference, in the text of this resolution, to Jerusalem as part of the occupied territories since 1967 and the relationship between this reference and the Israeli-Palestinian Declaration of Principles of 13 September 1993. It is well known that reference to Jerusalem as part of the occupied territories has been a consistent practice of the Council for a long time. In point of fact, every single resolution relating to the Palestinian issue adopted by the Council in the past has contained this language formulation, in preambular paragraphs and, indeed, in operative paragraphs alike.

Thus, the Council's adoption of the same language today only reflects continuation of this policy. Any attempt to change this language poses the danger of a change in this policy.

Here, we wish to express our disappointment and our deep concern at the abstention today of the delegation of the United States of America in the vote on the last preambular paragraph in the resolution as well as in the vote on the second preambular paragraph, which came as a total surprise to us at the very last moment. We earnestly hope that those abstentions do not signal a departure from the United States long-held consistent position on this sensitive issue.

With reference to the question of the potential impact of the Declaration of Principles on the question of Jerusalem and on other important issues such as settlements and refugees, which have been postponed until the second stage of negotiations between the two sides, I categorically affirm that the legal and political status of those issues is determined by international law and international legitimacy. Furthermore, postponement of negotiations on those issues has no bearing whatsoever on their current legal and political status. For example, according to international humanitarian law - specifically the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 - and several Security Council resolutions, the settlements are illegal and constitute obstacles to peace. They remain so, whether negotiations have taken place or not. The same applies to Jerusalem.

Arab East Jerusalem has been an integral part of the occupied Palestinian territory since 1967, and, according to relevant Security Council resolutions and the principles of international law, all measures taken by Israel, the occupying Power, aimed at changing the status of Jerusalem are null and void. If the Declaration of Principles has any bearing on this, it should be understood in favor of the position of the international community and not the opposite, since Israel accepted in principle that the final status of Jerusalem will be subject to negotiation. We hope that no party would contemplate distorting or manipulating the facts or would attempt to change the realities related to these important issues, because such attempts would certainly lead to dangerous results, which must be avoided.

The resolution adopted today by the Council is undoubtedly an essential and important step forward. The resolution itself demonstrates that the Council has upheld its own responsibilities towards the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem. In this resolution, the Council, after it strongly condemns Al-Khalil massacre, calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, given its obligations and responsibilities, to take specific measures, including confiscation of arms, with the aim of preventing illegal acts of violence by Israeli settlers. The Council, at the same time, calls for measures to be taken to guarantee the safety and protection of the Palestinian civilians throughout the occupied territory, including a temporary international or foreign presence. The Council

then requests the co-sponsors of the peace process to undertake the necessary support for the implementation of those measures.

The main issue here, as members are aware, is the provision of protection for the Palestinian civilians under occupation. The materialization of such protection will lead to the creation of a new situation on the ground in which our people may start to have a normal life, albeit a limited one, until the end of the occupation. The Security Council, as is clear from the resolution, did not get into the details of this issue. That fact does not, however, absolve the Council from its responsibilities towards the implementation of the resolution in the direction defined by the Council today and decided in its previous resolutions, particularly resolution 681 (1990).

We believe that the main task now is the implementation of the resolution. For our part, we will work with the parties concerned to begin this implementation immediately. The experience of our people with previous Security Council resolutions is not a happy one, and we strongly hope that things will be different this time.

With regard to the relationship between this resolution and the peace process, we agree with those who assert that this resolution cannot be viewed in isolation from the peace process, and we believe that the resolution will have a positive impact on that process. However, the real positive and qualitative impact will take place with the implementation of the resolution, not only with its adoption, and with the creation of a concrete, material situation which can be felt by the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory. That can be achieved, basically, by means of the international presence mentioned in the resolution.

We, the Palestinians, have a vested interest in the peace process and its success, and we are committed to it. But, at the same time, we say that the resumption of this process as if nothing had happened is not feasible, and suggesting such a thing is unacceptable and even immoral. The restarting of the process and its successful conclusion depend on the credibility of the process, the credibility of its sponsors and the credibility of its participants - especially the Israeli Government, which should adopt clear measures to respond to the pain and the needs of our people and not only to deal with the negative impact of the massacre on the Israeli side.

We have taken due note of the measures taken by the Israeli Government so far and we have said that they are steps in the right direction; however, they definitely fall short of meeting the requirements for rescuing the peace process. In the past, we have repeatedly enumerated steps in this regard which it is Israel's duty to adopt. These steps include the official and total cessation of all settlement activities, the disarming of the settlers, the removal of the settlers from towns and villages, especially from Hebron, and the expediting of negotiations on final solutions for the settlement question. Such steps could create a different situation, and they all fit within the framework of the Declaration of Principles and are perfectly in line with its provisions.

The Palestinian people need to be convinced that Israel is serious about peace. That, however, will be very difficult to do without their first becoming convinced that no more massacres will be committed aqainst them in the future.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I thank the representative of Palestine for his kind words addressed to me.

There are no further speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on the agenda.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.